

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 387, 388, 410 and 411 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter and amend the claims as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, read as follows:

1. to 384. (Canceled)

385. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus for charging a user for printout of output information, the apparatus comprising:

a memory storing a computer program; and

a processor that executes the computer program, the computer program comprising the steps of:

obtaining, from an information management apparatus unit through a network, output information to be printed out and first value information indicating a charge value of the output information to be printed out, wherein the output information is selected from a plurality of output information registered in the information management apparatus unit based on a user designation;

selecting whether or not additional information is to be printed out in addition to the output information to be printed out;

transmitting, to the information management apparatus unit through the network, an output format of the additional information which is set by a user, wherein the output format of the additional information indicates a position on a sheet of the additional

information to be printed out, when it is selected in the selecting step to print out the additional information in addition to the output information to be printed out;

receiving, from the information management apparatus unit through the network, second value information indicating a charge value of the additional information, which varies based on the output format of the additional information;

determining a charge amount for the printout of the output information to be printed out together with the additional information by discounting based on the first value information ~~and the second value information from the first value information~~, when it is selected in the selecting step to print out the additional information in addition to the output information to be printed out, or determining a charge amount for the printout of the output information based on the first value information without discounting based on the second value information, when it is not selected in the selecting step to print out the additional information;

outputting the charge amount determined by said determining step so as to display the charge amount for the printout on a display; and

printing out the ~~output information~~ additional information together with the ~~additional information~~ output information according to the output format of the additional information, which is automatically-selected and transmitted by the information management apparatus unit, when it is selected in the selecting step to print out the additional information in addition to the output information to be printed out,

wherein the additional information to be printed out at said printing out step is automatically-selected based on the number of times that additional information has

been printed out at said printing out step and a predetermined maximum limit count associated with the additional information.

386. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus according to claim 385, wherein said output information designated by the user contains plural types of output information, and the first value information corresponds with the plural types of output information.

387. and 388. (Canceled)

389. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus according to claim 387, wherein if the determined charge amount of the printout of the output information to be printed out together with the additional information ~~monetary amount obtained after the subtraction~~ becomes negative, said determining step determines the charge amount for the printout as zero.

390. (Canceled)

391. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus according to claim 385, wherein the additional information is advertisement information to be printed out together with the output information.

392. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus according to claim 385, wherein said computer program further comprises the steps of:

- receiving output information to be registered through the network;
- issuing output information identification code information corresponding to the registered output information; and
- entering, based on the user designation, the output information identification code information indicating the output information to be printed out.

393. (Currently Amended) An image forming method performed by an ~~information processing~~ image forming apparatus for charging for a user for printout of output information, the method comprising the steps of:

- obtaining, from an information management apparatus ~~unit~~ through a network, output information to be printed out and first value information indicating a charge value of the output information to be printed out, wherein the output information is selected from a plurality of output information registered in the information management apparatus ~~unit~~ based on a user designation;

- selecting whether or not additional information is to be printed out in addition to the output information to be printed out;

- transmitting, to the information management apparatus ~~unit~~ through the network, an output format of the additional information which is set by the user, wherein the output format of the additional information indicates a position on a sheet of the

additional information to be printed out, when it is selected in the selecting step to print out the additional information in addition to the output information to be printed out;

receiving, from the information management apparatus unit through the network, second value information indicating a charge value of the additional information, which varies based on the output format of the additional information;

determining a charge amount for the printout of the output information to be printed out together with the additional information by discounting based on the first value information ~~and the second value information from the first value information~~, when it is selected in the selecting step to print out the additional information in addition to the output information to be printed out, or determining a charge amount for the printout of the output information based on the first value information without discounting based on the second value information, when it is not selected in the selecting step to print out the additional information;

outputting the charge amount determined in said determining step so as to display the charge amount for the printout on a display; and

printing out the ~~output information~~ additional information together with the ~~additional information~~ output information according to the output format of the additional information, which is automatically-selected and transmitted by the information management apparatus unit, when it is selected in the selecting step to print out the additional information in addition to the output information to be printed out,

wherein the additional information to be printed out at said printing out step is automatically-selected based on the number of times the additional information has been

printed out at said printing out step and a predetermined maximum limit count associated with the additional information.

394. to 400. (Canceled)

401. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium storing an image forming program for controlling an ~~information processing~~ image forming apparatus to charge a user for printout of output information, the program comprising the steps of:

obtaining, from an information management apparatus ~~unit~~ via a network, the output information to be printed out and first value information indicating a charge value of the output information to be printed out, wherein the output information is selected from a plurality of output information registered in the information management apparatus ~~unit~~ based on a user designation;

selecting whether or not additional information is to be printed out in addition to the output information to be printed out;

transmitting, to the information management apparatus ~~unit~~ via the network, an output format of the additional information which is set by the user, wherein the output format of the additional information indicates a position on a sheet of the additional information to be printed out, when it is selected in the selecting step to print out the additional information in addition to the output information to be printed out;

receiving, from the information management apparatus unit through the network, second value information indicating a charge value of the additional information, which varies based on the output format of the additional information;

determining a charge amount for the printout of the output information to be printed out together with the additional information by discounting based on the first value information and the second value information from the first value information, when it is selected in the selecting step to print out the additional information in addition to the output information to be printed out, or determining a charge amount for the printout of the output information based on the first value information without discounting based on the second value information, when it is not selected in the selecting step to print out the additional information;

outputting the charge amount determined by said determining step so as to display the charge amount for the printout on a display; and

printing out the ~~output information~~ additional information together with the ~~additional information~~ output information according to the output format of the additional information, which is automatically-selected and transmitted by the information management apparatus unit, when it is selected in the selecting step to print out the additional information in addition to the output information to be printed out,

wherein the additional information to be printed out at said printing out step is automatically-selected based on the number of times the additional information has been printed out at said printing out step and a predetermined maximum limit count associated with the additional information.

402. to 408. (Canceled)

409. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus according to Claim 392, wherein said computer program further comprises the steps of:

- receiving additional information to be registered through the network;
- storing the received additional information in a database; and
- automatically selecting the additional information to be printed out together with the output information from the database in response to entry of the output information identification code information.

410. to 417. (Canceled)